1999

Sergeant Craig Voll

Wickliffe Police Department

Arguably, one of the most dangerous tasks in police work, is any undercover assignment.   Officers are thrust into a world which is foreign to them, and often have to act in ways that they would never do in real life.   Not only does the lifestyle of the moment put them in danger, but an even worse situation is created if their real identity is revealed. The suspects can be among the most dangerous when they realize that things aren't what they seemed, and they are facing arrest.   Routine can turn chaotic in seconds.

It was this type of situation which Sergeant Craig Voll found himself in on March 5, 1999.   Voll was working an undercover narcotics operation, with other Wickliffe officers and agents from the Lake County Narcotics Agency, when things suddenly went bad.   A suspect had just sold $600 of crack cocaine to an undercover officer in the rear parking lot of the Denny's Restaurant.   As Patrolman Steve Shum approached the suspect from the rear, in an effort to arrest him,   he slipped and fell.   The suspect put his car in reverse and tried to run Shum over, ramming a Wickliffe police vehicle in the process.

Sergeant Voll quickly reacted to this threat on a fellow officer's life by firing at the suspect, hitting him once in the chest.   The car stopped and the threat was ended. However, the situation got worse.   The suspect had swallowed the narcotics and began to have a seizure.   Firefighters were able to quickly attend to the suspect and get his stomach pumped.   Ultimately, Voll's shot not only saved an officer, but also saved the suspect, who may have died if he had escaped.

Voll was honored by the Blue Coats on February 9, 2000 at LaMalfa Center, receiving the Jorge Medina Distinguished Service Award. Speakers at the banquet were Dr. Ronald J. Taddeo, Blue Coats President, and Willoughby Mayor David E. Anderson. They presented a program entitled "A Stop at Historic Willoughby."

Sergeant Voll is now retired from the Wickliffe Police Department.